You Asked

Apart from Roman Catholicism and all Orthodox, how many different Christian denominations and non-denominations are there world-wide?

Perplexity pplx_pro

The most commonly cited research estimates around 45,000–47,000 Christian "denominations/rites/organizations" worldwide as of the early-to-mid 2020s, depending on the counting method. If you exclude the single Roman Catholic Church and the various Eastern/Oriental Orthodox bodies, you are still left with roughly 45,000 distinct Protestant, Anglican, Independent, Pentecostal/Charismatic, Restorationist, and other non-denominational or quasi-denominational groups worldwide under that broad definition.[0][1][2][3]

Why the numbers vary

Different institutions work from the World Christian Encyclopedia / World Christian Database lineage but define "denomination" differently. Some define a "denomination" as any organized Christian body in a particular country, so the same communion in multiple countries can be counted repeatedly. This is how they arrive at figures like about 33,000 denominations in 2001, rising to over 45,000–47,000 by 2023.[1][2][3][4][5][0]

Other analysts argue for a much smaller "real" number if one collapses national variations and small independent churches into larger theological or ecclesiastical "families," yielding a few hundred or fewer distinct denominational families instead of tens of thousands of separate entities. But the 45k-plus figure you hear quoted is explicitly counting at the granular organizational level.[5][6][7][8]

Excluding Catholic and Orthodox

The Roman Catholic Church is counted as one global denomination or "ecclesiastical tradition," albeit with internal rites. Eastern and Oriental Orthodoxy are treated as several traditions or denominational families (for example, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Church of the East), but they collectively represent only a tiny fraction of the 40k–47k organizational units being counted.[4][8][9][0]

So, on the methodology used by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity and the World Christian Database, removing:

- 1 Roman Catholic Church
- A small number of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox families

barely changes the global total, which remains on the order of 45,000 distinct Protestant, Anglican, Independent, non-denominational, and other Christian bodies worldwide.[2][3][0][1]

Denominational “organizations” vs “families”

Some scholars emphasize that while there may be ~45,000 organizations, the number of higher-level denominational “families” (Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Reformed, Pentecostal, etc.) is much smaller—perhaps in the hundreds, and often summarized into around 18–23 broad families depending on how marginal or non-Trinitarian groups are classified. But even on that more conservative family-level scheme, most of these families are non-Catholic and non-Orthodox, so the bulk of the diversity still lies in Protestant and Independent streams.[6][7][8][10][5]

Concise numeric answer

- Total Christian “denominations/rites/organizations” worldwide (broad WCE/CSGC method): roughly 45,000–47,000 as of about 2023.[3][0][1][2]
- Subtracting Roman Catholicism and all Orthodox traditions removes only a handful of entries from that total.[8][9][0][4]
- So, **on that common counting method, there are still roughly 45,000 distinct Christian denominations and non-denominational bodies worldwide apart from Rome and the Orthodox communions.**[0][1][2][3]

Would you like a breakdown by major non-Catholic, non-Orthodox “families” (e.g., Baptist, Pentecostal, Anglican, etc.) with approximate sizes rather than just the raw organizational count?